

MEMO

September 25, 2009

To: Mayor Holmes, Mayor Pro Tem Powers, Council members Kirby and Nesbitt
Fr: Council member Hanley

Re: Petition to Prevent a Catastrophic Fire in Auburn

Recommendation: Approve placing the petition – “Prevent A Catastrophic Fire in Auburn” – on the city’s website to facilitate the collection of resident names in support.

1. For several years, the federal Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) has had a Cooperative Agreement with CalFire for wood fuel removal and fire suppression in the 300-foot wide Auburn Shaded Fuel Break. There has been disappointment among some members in our community that not enough wood fuel is removed each year because the frequent fires in the state pull the inmate crews from this task toward fighting fires elsewhere.
2. When the BOR unilaterally cancelled the Cooperative Agreement in October 2009, the Auburn City Council took action in January by approving a letter to our federally-elected officials and to BOR to renew the agreement or sign a new agreement to begin once again the wood fuel reduction and fire suppression. Only after the devastating *49er Fire* in North Auburn, did the BOR forward an emergency agreement with CalFire. Many in our community are skeptical about whether this new emergency agreement will accomplish significant wood fuel reduction on the ground.
3. *It is time to try something new.* Let’s engage Auburn residents to help put public pressure on federal officials in Washington D.C. to devote more resources toward wood fuel reduction in the American River Canyon. Let’s collect hundreds of signatures from Auburn residents to demonstrate that our community is deeply concerned about protecting life and homes in our town.
4. Our Fire Chief lists one of the three objectives of a Strategic Plan: “*City of Auburn citizens to create a positive campaign program that identifies the concern and advocates support from Bureau of Reclamation top officials for fuels management on adjacent federal lands, while maintaining good working relationships.*” The petition is written to begin implementing this important objective now.
5. Members from the Greater Auburn Area Fire Safe Council and any other volunteers will circulate the petition among service clubs and throughout the community. Putting the petition on the city’s website can help collect signatures.

PREVENT A CATASTROPHIC FIRE IN AUBURN

A fire that starts on federally-owned lands in the American River Canyon could result in the injury and death of firefighters and residents and destroy numerous homes and businesses in Auburn.

Fire is inevitable. However, removing brush and wood fuel every year and creating defensible space around structures on private and public lands will save lives and homes.

The City of Auburn will do everything it can to lower the fire danger on private lands. However, fire officials in Auburn are disarmed if the fire danger continues to build on adjoining federal lands.

To prevent a catastrophic fire in Auburn, federal officials must immediately devote more resources to remove the dangerous levels of wood fuel from the American River Canyon now and each year.

Sign our online petition to strongly urge federal officials in Washington D.C. to help prevent a catastrophic fire in Auburn.

PETITION:

I strongly urge federal officials at the Department of Interior and Bureau of Reclamation in Washington D.C. and our federally-elected officials to act with urgency and immediately provide all necessary resources to remove dangerous brush and wood fuel in the American River Canyon along Auburn's eastern boundary.

Signed:

First Name

Last Name

Email

Zip/Postal Code

SUBMIT